

in the home over the life of the mortgage. Extending this program will give us an opportunity to determine whether ARM loans are a good choice for veterans and sound policy.

Again, I am committed to giving our veterans the opportunity to own a home and to improve the VA's home loan program. I am honored to introduce legislation today that helps our veterans achieve the American Dream they fought to preserve.

AFRICAN-AMERICAN
EMANCIPATION DAY

HON. RODNEY ALEXANDER

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 18, 2004

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of one of the oldest and most celebrated holidays in African-American history, June 19th, African-American Emancipation Day.

On tomorrow's date 139 years ago, at the end of the Civil War, Major General Gordon Granger arrived in Galveston, Texas, to enforce the Emancipation Proclamation and ensure that all slaves across the South were set free.

General Granger's order declared that "an absolute equality of rights and rights of property between former masters and slaves, and the connection heretofore existing between them becomes that between employer and free laborer." Upon hearing this news, the celebration began in the streets of Galveston and has spread through the years into a worldwide celebration commemorating African-American freedom.

In 1865, African-Americans began a long struggle to gain equal rights with other citizens. More than 100 years later, courageous men and women were still fighting for the civil rights of African Americans. The celebration of Juneteenth acknowledges the price, history, culture and freedom of part of our American society and helps to unify the Nation as a whole. African-Americans have played an important role throughout America's history, and we should all be grateful for their many contributions to our society.

The celebration of Juneteenth that has spread throughout this nation in these 139 years observes the momentous occasions in African-American history and the history of the United States. Each year, the Juneteenth celebration grows bigger and spreads farther than the year before, and I hope these events continue to broaden in the years to come.

Mr. Speaker, as African-Americans gather with family, friends, and neighbors in marking the tradition of Juneteenth, I extend my warmest wishes for a memorable celebration, and I ask all citizens to renew our commitment to a nation of equality and opportunity for all people.

HONORING BENT COUNTY WWII
MEMORIAL COMMITTEE

HON. MARILYN N. MUSGRAVE

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 17, 2004

Mrs. MUSGRAVE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Bent County World War II Memo-

rial Committee. Bent County was home to at least 1,200 men and women who served in WWII.

To commemorate their homegrown heroes, several citizens made the decision to gather as much information as possible about Bent County residents who served in the war. The 10 members of the WWII Memorial Committee have created a book to preserve the veterans' stories. On May 29, 2004 the book was displayed at the WWII Recognition Program at the old Bent County High School. The book not only contains personal stories and experiences of these veterans, but it also contains two pictures of each veteran, and information on where each veteran was stationed during the war. Other information that was entered included medals and honors veterans received during their time of service.

The committee has found approximately 400 of the 1,200 veterans, and they have received responses from at least 300. Aside from desperately seeking the information needed from the remainder of the veterans they are also collecting memorabilia including uniforms, military records, and cookbooks. The committee knows that this is an ongoing project, and the book and collection will eventually be displayed in the future John W. Rawlings Museum.

I am proud to serve a constituency that is willing to go to such great lengths to honor "America's Greatest Generation." Thank you to the following members of the Bent County WWII Memorial Committee: Fontella Gardner, Donna Dodson, Bill Lutz, Diane Baublits, Betty Pennington, Tom Pointon, Ron Kiniston, C.P. (Jerry) Bryant, Jr., Vivian Pitts, H.E. (Ed) Blackburn, Jr.

I would also like to extend a debt of gratitude to the individuals and businesses that offered special assistance to make this book and event a success: Ladies Auxiliary VFW Post 2411, Kitty Ann Long, VFW Post 2411, Jace Ratzlaff, Constituent Advocate (Congresswoman MARILYN MUSGRAVE), Walmart, Safeway, Mark MacDonnell.

The Las Animas/Bent County Community is fortunate to have had such brave men and women to serve in WWII, and they are fortunate to have so many citizens that recognize the importance of their service to the United States of America.

SUPREME COURT STAYS OUT OF
COLORADO REDISTRICTING

HON. BARNEY FRANK

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 18, 2004

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I submit to the RECORD the editorial from the New York Times, June 11, to which I referred to in my speech to the House this morning.

[From the New York Times, June 11, 2004]

A TROUBLING DISSENT

The Supreme Court did the right thing this week by staying out of a Colorado redistricting dispute. It properly deferred to the Colorado Supreme Court's ruling resolving the matter. What is troubling, however, is a dissent by Chief Justice William Rehnquist and two of his colleagues that argues for diving into the conflict. Given these justices' eagerness to defer to the states in other matters, the dissent smacks of partisan politics

and raises new concerns about the court's neutrality.

After the 2000 census, Colorado redrew its Congressional lines in a way that produced some real contests. One district was divided so evenly that Bob Beauprez, a Republican, won by only 121 votes. But when Republicans won the State Senate last year, they drew new lines that were more favorable to their party. The state's attorney general, a Democrat, challenged them in court.

The Colorado Supreme Court, in a well-reasoned decision, held that the redistricting violated the Colorado Constitution. It said the constitution required that redistricting be done every 10 years, after the census, but no more. The United States Supreme Court has long held that when a state supreme court resolves a case based on the state's constitution, respect for the state's judiciary requires the federal courts to stay out of the matter. A majority did just that this week, when it let the Colorado Supreme Court's ruling stand.

But Chief Justice Rehnquist's dissent, joined by Antonin Scalia and Clarence Thomas, is bluntly dismissive of the Colorado Supreme Court. In the dissenters' view, the court was merely "purporting" to decide the case exclusively according to state law. They would have accepted the case so the United States Supreme Court could have considered reversing the Colorado Supreme Court and reinstating the pro-Republican redistricting plan.

The dissent attracted little notice because it fell one vote short of the four votes needed to review a case. But it is disturbingly reminiscent of the court's ruling in *Bush v. Gore*, in which five justices who had long been extremely deferential to state power suddenly overruled the Florida Supreme Court's interpretation of Florida election law.

Cases like these quite naturally invite skepticism. As the court learned in 2000, it does grave harm to its reputation if it appears to be deciding election-law cases for partisan advantage. In cases of this sort, the court must make a special effort to show that it is acting on the basis of legal principle, the only basis for a court to act. By departing from his deeply held belief in state autonomy to side with the Republican Party in a redistricting case, Chief Justice Rehnquist has once again invited the public to question this court's motives.

TO COMMEMORATE JUNETEENTH

HON. NICK LAMPSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 18, 2004

Mr. LAMPSON. Mr. Speaker, the annual celebration of African American Emancipation Day, also known as Juneteenth, had its origins in my congressional district. This Juneteenth celebration, a 130 year tradition beginning in Galveston, Texas in 1865, has grown into the nation's oldest and most widely celebrated commemoration of the end of slavery.

Today, Juneteenth celebrations are hosted in cities across America and beyond. It is a day, a week, and in some areas a month-long celebration marked with music, festivals, and family gatherings.

Mr. Speaker, the growing popularity of Juneteenth celebrations signifies a level of growth and dignity in America that has been long overdue. People of all races, religions and backgrounds come together in celebration of Juneteenth to acknowledge a dark period of